

CURRENT PROVIDER VERSION

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING

MASSACHUSETTS &

NATIONAL EMS STANDARDS

NATIONAL EMS EDUCATION STANDARDS

**NATIONAL EMS CERTIFICATION STANDARDS
& THE ADOPTION OF NATIONAL EMS
CERTIFICATION BY THE NREMT**

NATIONAL SCOPE OF PRACTICE TRANSITION

VERSION I.A

06-06-13

M A S S A C H U S E T T S
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
— DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH —

OVERVIEW

There are a lot of changes currently occurring to EMS in Massachusetts. The goal of this document is to answer many of the questions regarding these changes for **current providers**. This document is intended for the entire EMS community: **all EMS providers, educators, Service Directors and Chiefs, training officers, physicians, and other leadership.**

The most significant distinction to make is that there are two separate changes occurring that affect Massachusetts EMS providers' certifications:

- The adoption of National Registry of EMTs (NREMT) certification as the basis for Massachusetts initial certification and recertification, as part of the requirement to maintain MA state certification (licensure). and;
- The transition to the National EMS Scope of Practice model. These two changes are occurring independently of each other.

If you do not see your question answered, please email it to gibson.mccullagh@state.ma.us. Please be sure to regularly check our website (<http://mass.gov/dph/oems>) for the most recent version of this guide.

CONTENTS

| | | |
|-------------------|---|--------|
| CURRENT PROVIDERS | NREMT ADOPTION Overview NREMT Reinstatement (Mark King Initiative) | pg. 4 |
| ALL PROVIDERS | RECERTIFICATION & CONTINUING EDUCATION 2014 Recertification Cycle 2015 Recertification Cycle Continued Competency Program National requirements (NCCR) Local requirements (LCCR) Individual requirements (ICCR) Tracking Continuing Education Registering Continuing Education classes | pg. 10 |
| ALL PROVIDERS | NATIONAL SCOPE OF PRACTICE TRANSITION Overview EMT-Basics EMT-Intermediates EMT-Paramedics | pg. 13 |

CURRENT PROVIDERS: NREMT ADOPTION

Q1. I am currently a MA-certified EMT; do I need to be nationally certified by NREMT?

A1. No, current MA-certified EMTs will not be required to become a NREMT-certified EMT. Current MA-certified EMTs who also hold current NREMT certification will be required to maintain their NREMT certification and current MA-certified EMTs who once held NREMT-certification at the same level will be offered the opportunity to reinstate (see A4, below). MA-certified EMTs not currently holding NREMT certification are encouraged to obtain NREMT certification, but they will not be required to do so.

Q2. Do I have to take a test to maintain my current MA certification?

A2. No one will be required to test to maintain their MA certification. Due to the separate National EMS Scope of Practice transition, EMT-Intermediates will have to take a course and a written exam if they choose to become Advanced EMTs (please see National EMS Scope of Practice: EMT-Intermediates).

Q3. What is the significance of the July 1, 2013 deadline for our state's adoption of the NREMT?

A3. The July 1, 2013 deadline only applies to initial certification; on July 1, 2013 OEMS will be adopting the NREMT certification as the entry requirement for Massachusetts certification. The last possible day for an examination to occur under the old-MA-testing standard is June 30, 2013.

Q4. I once held NREMT certification but let it lapse. I hear I may be able to get it back. How do I do this?

A4. Current MA EMTs who once held NREMT certification at the same level, but let it lapse, will be able to reinstate their NREMT status between July 1, 2013 and January 1, 2014 without any testing under the Mark King Initiative. The NREMT will be contacting all MA EMTs who this applies to. If you do not hear from the NREMT by August 1, 2013 and you believe you should have, please contact OEMS.

Q5. I am not certified by the NREMT. If I am interested in obtaining certification, how can I?

A5. The only way to obtain National EMS certification is to successfully complete the appropriate NREMT certification examination process. Providers will not be "grandfathered" into the NREMT based on a MA certification. If individuals are interested in obtaining this national certification, they should visit <http://nremt.org>.

M A S S A C H U S E T T S
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

ALL EMS PROVIDERS: RECERTIFICATION AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

Q6. I understand continuing education requirements are changing. What does that mean to me?

A6. Massachusetts is the second state to adopt the new-NREMT Continued Competency Program as the recertification standard. EMS providers who expire in 2014 will have the choice of completing continuing education requirements for recertification under either the old-MA standard or this new-NREMT standard. Providers who expire in 2015 will have to recertify under the new-NREMT standard. However, if providers who expire in 2015 have already completed requirements for the old-MA standard, OEMS will assist them in “translating” those credits to the new-NREMT standard. More information on the new Continuing Education requirements can be found at:

<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/hcq/oems/national-registry-for-massachusetts-ems.html>

Q7. I'm scheduled to recertify in 2014; what continuing education do I have to do? If I've already started my continuing education under the old-MA standard will I still be able to use that to recertify?

A7. Anyone due to recertify in 2014 can choose to meet either the old-MA standard or the new-NREMT standard (the Continued Competency Program) for continuing education required for Massachusetts recertification. If you already have continuing education credits towards the old-MA standard, you have the ability to utilize them completely (and meet the old-MA standard).

Q8. I'm scheduled to recertify in 2015; what continuing education do I have to do? If I've already started my continuing education under the old-MA standard will I still be able to use that to recertify?

A8. Anyone due to recertify in 2015 will have to meet the new-NREMT standard (the Continued Competency Program) for continuing education required for Massachusetts recertification. If you already have continuing education credits towards the old-MA standard, chances are that most of it will apply to the Continued Competency Program. If you already have completed a refresher (which is no longer required under the CCP), OEMS will work with you to identify aspects of it that will apply to the new-NREMT standard. **Individuals due to recertify in 2015 who have not yet taken a traditional refresher should not take one.**

Q9. Where can I find the requirements and what is included in the new-NREMT standard (the Continued Competency Program)?

A9. You can find more information on our website at:

<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/hcq/oems/national-registry-for-massachusetts-ems.html>

Q10. Under the new-NREMT standard (Continued Competency Program), what is the national portion? What is the local portion? What is individual portion?

A10. The levels are broken down as follows:

NATIONAL Continued Competency Requirements (NCCR)

National Continued Competency Requirements are determined by the NREMT Board of Directors based upon widespread input from EMS researchers, EMS physician and EMS provider stakeholders. The NCCR comprises 50% of the overall requirements necessary to recertify. Topics in the NCCR are chosen among the following: evidence-based medicine, any changes in the National EMS Scope of Practice Model, science-related position papers that affect EMS patient care, topics which cover patient care tasks that have low frequency yet high criticality, and articles which improve knowledge to deliver patient care. The NREMT will provide the educational materials for this component to the EMS community as part of their mission - to protect the public.

LOCAL Continued Competency Requirements (LCCR)

Local Continued Competency Requirements are developed and delivered at the state or local EMS level. LCCR represents 25% of the necessary requirements for all provider levels. The LCCR topics are chosen by local authorities (or State EMS Office, if applicable). These topics may include changes in state protocols, tasks which require remediation based upon a quality assurance system, and/or topics noted to be of importance based upon run data reported to the National EMS Information Systems from the local level. These topics are locally chosen and will likely be different for every EMS system in the nation.

INDIVIDUAL Continued Competency Requirements (ICCR)

Individual Continued Competency Requirements represent 25% of the needed education. For the individual's first ICCR, they may select any EMS related education. For following recertification cycles, individuals will identify what these requirements are based upon outcomes of a self-assessment guide (offered at no additional fee) on the NREMT website as part of the recertification submission process. The assessment guide will help providers assess their knowledge and remediate any identified deficiencies (over four core content areas). The specific assessment guide results are provided only to the individual EMS provider; de-identified, aggregate data will be provided to Training Officers and **no actions** will be taken to restrict practice or certification of providers who need remediation. If no deficiencies are indicated, the EMS provider may select any EMS-related education for their ICCR component

Q11. How do I find out what is acceptable under the new-NREMT standard?

A11. The NREMT will be making available educational resources for the Continued Competency Program. Agency (employer) Training Officers and Medical Directors will establish the Local requirements (LCCR). The resources materials will provide guidance on that process.

Q12. Where will my continuing education be tracked?

A12. All continuing education will be tracked on the NREMT's website, regardless of an individual's NREMT status.

M A S S A C H U S E T T S
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Q13. Do I need to use the NREMT website to track my continuing education and if I am a Massachusetts certified EMT who is not NREMT certified?

A13. Yes. All Massachusetts EMTs (regardless of NREMT status) will be utilizing the NREMT website to track their continuing education. Non-NREMT Massachusetts EMTs will have a separate login page (instructions and details to be available July 2013).

Q14. How will continuing education be approved?

A14. Continuing education will still be approved under the old-MA system. Instructors will apply to their Regional EMS Council office for course approval and a course number; Accredited Training Institutions will simply register for the course number (no approval). Once the course is completed, however, the training officer is responsible for uploading the attendance information to the NREMT website. If a provider takes a course outside of their typical agency or service, they will receive proof of attendance and manually enter their own credit hours (verified later by their training officer).

Q15. Our ambulance service typically uses a traditional refresher to provide continuing education to EMTs and paramedics. Will we still be able to do so?

A15. For 2014, refreshers will still be applicable (if providers are recertifying under the old-MA standard). In the future, it is likely that many of the institutions that offered refreshers will offer the National Continued Competency Program (NCCP) as a bundle.

ALL EMS PROVIDERS: MA-NATIONAL EMS SCOPE OF PRACTICE TRANSITION

Q16. What is “National EMS Scope of Practice” and why does Massachusetts need to transition?

A16. In 2007, the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) released the EMS Education Agenda for the Future. This document was the result of several years of research, outreach, and revisions, and represents the collective vision for where EMS education should be across the nation. The Task force that contributed to it was comprised of a diverse group of representatives from NHTSA, U.S. Health and Human Services, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the International Association of Firefighters, the American College of Surgeons, the American College of Emergency Physicians, the American Ambulance Association, the National Association of State EMS Officials, EMS for Children, the National Association of EMTs, and the National Registry of EMTs and many others. Rarely has such a diverse but representative group of EMS leadership gathered and collectively supported such a report. The National EMS Scope of Practice was one element that was developed in this Agenda, and a recommendation that all of these entities supported.

The National EMS Scope of Practice reflects the changing demands of EMS across our nation. The new standards are meant to provide not only a higher level of care from all providers but care that reflects evidence-based medicine, with quality and patient safety as top priorities. The health care industry is constantly developing its practices to best address the needs of our populations. EMS is not exempt from this need to continually reassess how we should provide the best possible care. To reinforce this national development, it should be noted that all states are being prompted to make this transition. Even states that do not use the NREMT as the testing basis for their state EMS certification, such as New York, have already started the transition. It is vital to the citizens and visitors of our Commonwealth that we do not withhold this new national standard of emergency care from them

It is important to note that a non-NREMT MA EMS provider who transitions will not automatically receive a NREMT certification: The only way to obtain a NREMT-certification is to test.

Q17. I am an EMT-Basic. Do I need to do to transition to National EMS Scope of Practice? Do I still need to transition even if I am a non-NREMT Massachusetts EMT-Basic?

A17. Yes, all Massachusetts EMS providers will have to transition, regardless of NREMT status. An “EMT-Basic” will transition to an “EMT” after completing their first recertification under the new-NREMT standard (the Continued Competency Program). By completing the National Continued Competency Program, they will have effectively transitioned. No additional courses are required. The deadline to transition at the EMT level is 2015 or 2016, depending on the EMT’s recertification year.

M A S S A C H U S E T T S
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Q18. I am an EMT-Intermediate; do I need to do to transition to National EMS Scope of Practice? Do I still need to transition even if I am a non-NREMT Massachusetts EMT-Intermediate?

A18. Yes, all Massachusetts EMS providers will have to transition, regardless of NREMT status. The transition from EMT-Intermediate to the new mid-certification level under the National EMS Scope of Practice, now called "Advanced EMT," is the most significant of all. An EMT-Intermediate will transition to Advanced EMT after completing a state-approved transition course which is approximately 60-100hrs long (continued education credit hours will be available for this transition course). It should be noted that this is a significant shift in assessment skills, and thus the longer transition course. **EMT-Intermediates will have one full certification period to transition** (deadline is 2016 or 2017, depending on your recertification year). For more information on the EMT-Intermediate to Advanced EMT transition, please review the following document:

<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/emergency-services/scope-of-practice/emt-intermediates.pdf>

Q19. I am an EMT-Paramedic. Do I need to do to transition to National EMS Scope of Practice? Do I still need to transition even if I am a non-NREMT Massachusetts EMT-Paramedic?

A19. Yes, all Massachusetts EMS providers will have to transition, regardless of NREMT status. An "EMT-Paramedic" will transition to "Paramedic" after completing a state-approved transition course which is approximately 10-20hrs long (continued education credit hours will be available). **EMT-Paramedics have one full certification period to transition** (deadline is 2016 or 2017 depending on your recertification year).